

MINUTES
OPC MEETING
MARCH 19, 2015

First Selectman Jayme Stevenson called the meeting to order in Room 206 of Town Hall at 8:39 a.m.

Present were First Selectman Jayme Stevenson; Board of Education Chairman Betsy Hagerty-Ross; Planning & Zoning Chairman Susan Cameron; RTM Moderator Sarah Seelye and Board of Finance Chairman Elizabeth Mao. Also in attendance were Selectman Susan Marks, Board of Education Vice-Chairman Michael Harman and Town Administrator Karl Kilduff.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Ms. Cameron noted that work on the Town Plan of Conservation and Development continues. Mr. Kilduff stated that the plan should reflect a general vision for the direction of town planning. The town still has flexibility in future planning and Ms. Cameron noted that the plan may always be revised.

A presentation on the redevelopment plans for Old Town Hall Homes is on the agenda for the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting tonight, March 19, 2015.

Board of Finance

Mrs. Mao and the Board are reviewing the Town and Board of Education budgets. She raised a concern about the appropriateness of a capital expenditure request by the BoE for work at 35 Leroy Ave. because the BoE has not yet accepted ownership of the building. A discussion ensued.

In its review of the budgets the Board of Finance will look for items that may be bundled together and bonded.

Representative Town Meeting

Mrs. Seelye said the Rules Committee has asked the Finance & Budget and Education sub-committees to provide budget highlights for the full RTM. These are not proposed as opinion pieces but rather to present the core parts of the budget in a simpler format. Mrs. Seelye asked Mr. Kilduff to add a brief summary of the total budget to the April printing of the budget in the newspaper.

Board of Education

The Board of Education will tour the schools and the town garage this Saturday, March 21, 2015. Mrs. Stevenson suggested that Mrs. Mao extend the invitation to tour the garage to Board of Finance members. The date for graduation will be set at the next Board of Education meeting in April. July 1, 2015 is when Dr. Brenner takes the reigns as Superintendent of Schools for Darien. Mrs. Stevenson expressed a desire to meet with him if he has any availability during the transition period.

The Milone and MacBroom report on facilities and demographics is expected before April 1, 2015. Mrs. Hagerty-Ross will share the date of the report with everyone on OPC.

Mrs. Stevenson referred to an Op Ed article in the CT Mirror which has her concerned about the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and the security of child specific information. Mrs. Hagerty-Ross said she and her Board are aware of it and agree with her concerns. House Bill No. 7017, An Act Concerning Student Data Privacy was being addressed in Hartford, CT today, March 19, 2015.

First Selectman

First Selectman Stevenson and the Board of Selectmen continue to work on parking issues. As of April 1, 2015 the Leroy West lot will only be for permit holders. Grove St. permit holders will be moved into the daily parking spaces at Leroy West so the Grove street lot may revert back to its intended purpose, which was to serve the needs of downtown Darien. On April 16, 2015 the Commissioner James Redeker of the CT DOT will attend a COG meeting at Town Hall. Mrs. Stevenson hopes to engage him in a review of parking in Noroton Heights while he's in town.

House Bill No. 6851 establishes an entity — the Connecticut Transit Corridor Development Authority — aimed at encouraging business development within a 1/2-mile radius of rail or bus transit stations. Basically, this would give the State eminent domain rights for most of Darien.

The Board of Selectmen has been asked to consider establishing an Advisory Pedestrian Safety Committee to address walking and biking throughout town. Besides the capital costs to installing sidewalks, Mrs. Stevenson reviewed other concerns such as additional town operating expenses, crosswalks and crossing guard issues.

The State now requires towns to submit an EMS plan every five years. Darien has hired a consultant to review the Town's EMS plan. It should be complete before the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Kilduff asked when the town may begin demolition of the properties at 32 Hoyt St. (by Holmes School) and on Edgerton St. (by MMS). Mrs. Hagerty-Ross hopes to get back to Mr. Kilduff by the end of the week.

First Selectman Stevenson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the OPC meeting held on January 15, 2015. Mrs. Seelye noted a spelling error in her name. Mr. Cameron moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mrs. Mao seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

First Selectman Stevenson asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Mao moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Hagerty-Ross and approved by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda O'Leary
Recording Secretary